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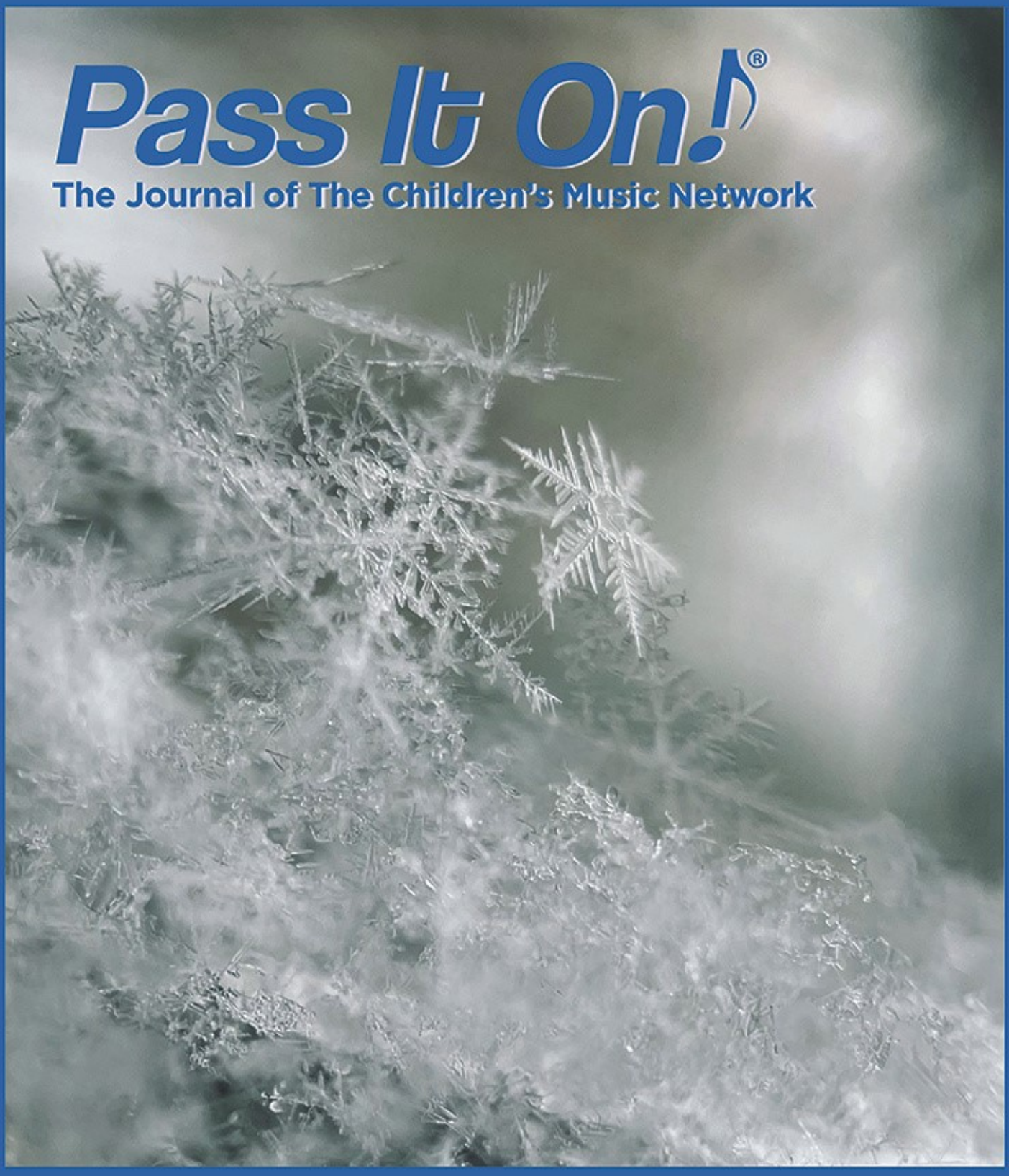
The Journal of The Children's Music Network



Winter 2022 | Issue #96

Shaping Our World

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Shaping Our World

Amplifying Black Voices in the Classroom

"It's late but it's not too late." That is what I found myself saying when I was leading the last day of Zoom assembly for my school this past spring. We had decided to celebrate Juneteenth. A student asked a great question: "Why did they wait until now to make Juneteenth a federal holiday?" Page 3.

Thinking Like a Business: Creating Your Business Plan

"I just don't have a business mind." Why is it a common refrain for folks like us at CMN to feel they don't have the right mind for business? I'm here to tell you: You do. Page 9.

Anything Song

"I wrote 'Anything Song' long ago when I was young . . . back in the hippie days. I traveled with my guitar on my back, and folks would ask if I could play it. 'Sure,' I said. 'Okay, then play something.' 'What?' 'Oh, anything.' And ta-dah! The 'Anything Song'!" Page 15.

Who Can Count the Snowflakes

"I live in a relatively rural area in New England with wide-ranging seasonal changes and a curriculum that follows them, so naturally many of my chants reflect that. But as any songwriter knows, sometimes you lose control . . ." Page 19.

I'm Gonna Use My Hands

"It is a song I wrote to lift myself out of a slump during a particularly bad news week. I thought it might be a good song to sing with students—a song to encourage the kids to participate in making the world a better place." Page 26.

Social Media Tip #4

Watch for Trends! If you notice a pattern or strategy rising in popularity and it aligns with your messaging, then it's a great idea to capitalize on it to drive engagement. Page 28.

Amplifying Black Voices in the Classroom

by Margot Bevington[1]

"It's late but it's not too late."

That is what I found myself saying when I was leading the last day of Zoom assembly for my school this past spring. We had decided to celebrate Juneteenth by playing the BrainPOP video about Juneteenth[2] and announcing that President Biden had just made it a federal holiday.

A student asked a great question:

"Why did they wait until now to make Juneteenth a federal holiday?"

This led to a discussion of the Black Lives Matter movement and the impetus that it has given toward recognizing systematic racism not just in police departments, but also in our government policies, schools, businesses, and communities.

My reflection was sincere, yet said as a white person, feeling responsible for being part of systematic racism. I have contributed, albeit unknowingly, to that system, even as a music teacher and children's singer/songwriter. Not only have I included songs in my music lessons that I hadn't known were part of racist minstrel performances, for a much of my career, I also depended on a music curriculum that very much emphasized Western European music history. Did I also wait too long before taking action?

I have no qualification to say there is hope for the future. I have done my best to learn to do better over the years, but I'm not sure I have the best solutions. Although I'm hopeful, I'm not sure the actions I list below to dismantle systematic racism by amplifying Black voices in the music classroom are the best actions to take.

It is logical, however, that the more we decide to take the time to reflect on the parts we play to contribute to systematic racism, the more we will, collectively, be able to identify injustices that exist for our students and families. The more we communicate to others about the problems we see and possible solutions, the more we'll be able to collaborate toward the "best" solutions. The more we act to implement these solutions, the better chance we'll have of making change. It's late to be acting on behalf of the Black children and families we serve, but it's not too late!

Why Amplify Black Voices?

By amplifying Black voices in the music classroom, teachers can help cultivate students' awareness, appreciation, and celebration of the beauty and perspective represented by Black voices.

Representation of Black voices in music benefits all students and indicates to them that Black voices matter. They are significant and valuable components of diverse humanity in all its forms and emotions.

Amplifying Black voices in the music classroom is a way to practice antiracism, defined in Ibram X. Kendi's book, *How to Be an Antiracist*, as "one who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea." The idea that minority voices, especially Black voices, should be amplified and celebrated is antiracist.

Next step? Take action!

How Can I Take Action?

To help with this section, I'll refer to the graphic from the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which details elements of antiracist education.

1 When I "examine the **historical roots** and contemporary manifestations of racial prejudice and discrimination," what strikes me is the way our communities and schools continue to segregate by race, despite policy. This *de facto* segregation results from **racial prejudice**—historic unfair housing, employment, profiling, and voting policies.

To Do:

- Teach or volunteer for schools and organizations that serve communities resulting from this *de facto* segregation.
- Be aware that minority students, especially in predominantly white classrooms, are at risk for racism at school and within the community.
- If applicable, be aware of your upbringing in a society entrenched in systematic racism. What history did your school fail to teach you? Educate yourself! Not sure where to start? Start with this helpful resource from Ben & Jerry's[3]!
- Pass on this history to students in relevant, age-appropriate ways. Be genuine and unequivocal. Do not hold back facts based on the age of students or your bias of whether they'll be able to understand. At the same time, try to present the information in a way that makes sense to them. Songs are perfect vehicles to provide context and understanding.

2 Look within to examine your attitudes and behavior. How do **race and culture** influence you? Race, culture, and music are intertwined and inseparable. Modeling attitudes and behavior that address and highlight this connection empowers students to start to make connections as well.

If our students and families see us taking opportunities to be inclusive of Black voices and addressing the lack of fair representation or recognition of Black voices in our music curriculum and community, they are more likely to value and mimic this behavior.

To Do:

- Think—how can you best model positive attitudes and behaviors around race and culture when you present music to children? Consider assessing your experience and comfort level—how authentic can you be in your actions to help amplify Black voices?
- Consider reading *So You Want to Talk About Race*, by Ijeoma Oluo, a great introduction to talking about race in considerate and constructive ways.

3 To "identify appropriate **antiracist resources**" for music education, you may need to get creative—it's a fairly new concept! Be prepared to try new things and especially to let go of old folk songs that you didn't know were actually manifestations of historical racism.

To Do:

- Check out Decolonizing the Music Classroom[5]. Resources include podcasts, books, and curriculum materials.
- Family Music Forward is committed to amplifying the voices of Black family artists. Check out Kukuza artists[6] and consider making one of them a featured artist in your classroom.
- There have been several efforts to pool antiracist resources for the music classroom. Did you know "Jingle Bells" started as a blackface minstrel song? I didn't! Check out any of these pooled resource sites for more information!
- Antiracist Resources for the Music Classroom[7] – McGraw Hill

TALKING ABOUT RACE | NMAAHC
9 Important Elements of ANTIRACIST EDUCATION
1 Examining the historical roots and contemporary manifestations of racial prejudice and discrimination
2 Exploring the influence of race and culture on one's own personal and professional attitudes and behavior
3 Identifying appropriate anti-racist resources to incorporate into the curriculum in different subject areas
4 Developing new approaches to teaching children using varying cognitive approaches to diverse learning styles
5 Identifying and counteracting bias and stereotyping in learning material
6 Dealing with racial tensions & conflicts
7 Identifying appropriate assessment and placement procedures and practices
8 Assessing the hidden curriculum and making it more inclusive and reflective of all students' experiences
9 Ensuring that personnel policies and practices are consistent with equity goals and that they provide managers with the knowledge & skills to implement equity programs

Image from: https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist[4]

- Finding Music Resources: Antiracist Music Pedagogy[8] – Gettysburg College
- Antiracism Music Resources[9] – University of North Carolina
- Making Friends With the Elephant in the Room Part I[10], Part 2[11] by Lisa Heintz (*Pass It On!* Winter and Spring 2021)

4 Have you differentiated your teaching and classroom management to reach the students you serve? Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)[12] is a method I have seen work very well, even with very difficult behaviors. It's basically accentuating and rewarding, as well as modeling, positive, prosocial behavior. **Diverse learning styles** include students that thrive on movement and repetition—these are needs that can be easily met in the music classroom.

To Do:

- Develop a rapport with your students—learn who they are and how to best communicate with them. Practice PBIS and create a safe, positive learning environment.
- If you have students with special needs in your classroom, consult with their special education teacher or read their IEP to learn how to best accommodate their needs. In addition, based on your own observations, discover how to connect with each student through music.

5 **Counteracting bias** in learning material includes being more intentional about how much diversity students experience in music class—that means amplifying Black voices and images. Do you love to decorate your room? Change your displays to feature Black artists!

To Do:

- Instead of just playing music by Black artists, consider showing videos as well. The Kukuza Fest YouTube Playlist[13] has great videos to share.
- Check out this resource for children's books that feature Black musicians[14].

6 This year, to help students process **racial tensions and conflicts,** my school organized special workshops on social justice. As educators, along with families, it's our responsibility to help students process what's going on in society. Consider ways you can do that in the music classroom or in collaboration with other educators.

To Do:

- Check out these recommendations on helping students process conflicts around racially charged protests[15] and resolve conflict in the classroom[16].
- In addition, check out these songs about developing positive social skills on Songs for Teaching[17].

7 **Assessment** and placement procedures happen outside the music classroom, but music teachers can help students who are marginalized by assessments such as these to feel successful and valued as members of the classroom community.

To Do:

- Find ways for everyone to participate in music class. Emphasize the power of teamwork and express how everyone is a valued member of the group.

- Consider music class a valuable place to boost socioemotional learning[18]—something that isn't usually assessed but is just as important as academics!

8 Amplifying Black voices in the music classroom interrupts the **hidden music curriculum** that places a high value on classical Western European traditions. Black voices were an integral part of the development of American popular music. More and more resources are available to highlight Black artists in music history.

To Do:

- In your classroom, give more airtime to age-appropriate songs from the R&B, hip-hop, funk, jazz, calypso, rap, Motown, reggae, go-go, and global genres, just like WEENation Radio[19].
- Check out this resource on Black artists in American music history available through Teach Rock[20].
- Consider featuring the role of music in African American history. Here's my resource on Music of the Civil Rights Era[21].

9 Identify your equity goals, both for your practice as a music professional and for the children and families you serve. For example, would you like to create a safe space for students and families? Create an action plan for how: Will you be more careful about your song choices? Will you try learning how to relate to different experiences and backgrounds? How will you do that and still be authentic to your own experience? If you're not sure, seek out helpful books, workshops, or professional development.

To Do:

- If you are a music professional or organization with an online presence, display your equity goals in a prominent online location.
- Members of the children's music community offer workshops for educators working toward equity goals. Coordinate with your school or educator community to book them! Alphabet Rockers[22], Culture Queen[23], and Uncle Devin[24] are some of the many artists who offer workshops.

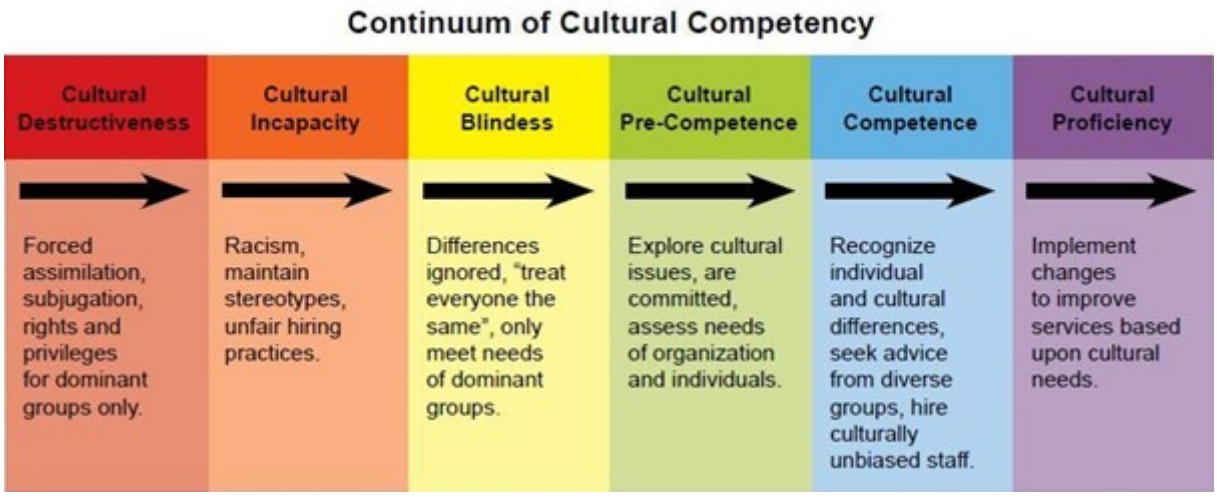
Continuum of Cultural Competency
Cultural Destructiveness
Cultural Incapacity
Cultural Blindess
Cultural Pre-Competence
Cultural Competence
Cultural Proficiency
Forced assimilation, subjugation, rights and privileges for dominant groups only.
Racism, maintain stereotypes, unfair hiring practices.
Differences ignored, "treat everyone the same", only meet needs of dominant groups.
Explore cultural issues, are committed, assess needs of organization and individuals.
Recognize individual and cultural differences, seek advice from diverse groups, hire culturally unbiased staff.
Implement changes to improve services based upon cultural needs.

Image from https://www.camft.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Chapters/Diversity.pdf?ver=2020-02-20-180508-860[25]

Conclusion

Be a change agent! If you work for or with schools, educator organizations, or even within the children's music community, inquire about and advocate for diversity committee work. This way, you can collaborate with other educators to help children receive unbiased music education that celebrates diversity—especially **by amplifying Black voices in the music classroom**! Refer to the helpful graphic that guides schools and organizations toward becoming culturally proficient[26]. The key word defining the final stage, cultural proficiency, is *implement*. Take action to improve how you serve Black children and families!

Many thanks to Devin Walker for reviewing this article and providing suggestions!

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Thinking Like a Business: Creating Your Business Plan

by Matt Fernald[1]

"I just don't have a business mind."

It's a common refrain among our people. What's the deal with business versus music and art? Why is it common for folks like us at CMN to feel they don't have the *right mind* for business?

I'm here to tell you: you do.

Here's how you use that right mind: You make a business plan.

First, a little background on me. I write this article with experience starting my own sole proprietorship, then converting it to an LLC and building a team of five employee-teachers. We teach at about seventy different locations in the San Francisco Bay Area under the name Golden Acorn Music. Along the way, I completed an online MBA from Quantic School[2].

Second, a little background on artistry and business. The logic behind the "not the right mind" sentiment usually breaks down as follows:

1. Music and art are warm, creative.
2. Business is cold, calculating.
3. The two just don't mix.

There are many ways to address this, and I usually make two counterarguments. First: Yes, music work is certainly warm and creative. It also has an *audience*—typically a very specific audience. A business plan is a great way to optimize your time finding and delighting that audience.

Second: Not all businesses are cold and calculating. Admittedly, it is painfully easy to look around and observe all sorts of bad players in the business world. Fortunately, those bad players have little to no bearing on *you* and *your business*. You get to choose how you want to do business, and I'm happy to report that you can do good (income-generating) business in a way that is creative, artistic, and moral.

After many conversations with CMNers on mixing music and business, I created a workshop to help coach groups of musicians and first-time businesspeople. This article distills all the information from that workshop, a version of which I led at the recent CMN Conference.

How can you find your business mind? You're going to create a simple, one-page business plan, which has five parts:

1. Products and services
2. Audience and competition (market analysis)
3. Marketing strategy (what's your selling point?)
4. Key metrics for success
5. Pricing and budgeting

First, get ready to write. (Or type.) Copy those five parts onto a paper (or document), evenly spaced.

1) Products and Services

Under this heading, write down everything you currently offer. And by "everything," I mean *everything that you would say yes to doing if someone asked you for it tomorrow*.

As you go, try to keep the things you offer organized into **products** (tangible offerings, e.g., CDs, t-shirts, instruments) and **services** (nontangible offerings, e.g., concerts, parties).

Once you've triple-checked and made sure you got everything, see if you can pare things down to a "logical list." By that, I mean what's the most time- and resource-efficient collection of products and services you can offer? For example, birthday parties and in-school assemblies probably have a lot of overlap—they may involve much of the same content and equipment. By contrast, birthday parties and private lessons probably have a lot less overlap.

(Remember, this is an exercise—you actually don't have to cut anything from your offerings if you don't want to!)

Then we move to:

2) Audience and Competition

Now that you know what you offer, this two-part exercise is based on two questions: 1) What population segments are your offerings best for? 2) What's already available for those segments?

When you answer number one, you're trying to identify your *audience*. You may be tempted to insist, "My music is for *everyone*!" I am sorry to say that this is never true. Even "September" isn't for everyone, and if Earth, Wind & Fire can't make a truly universal song, you probably can't either.

But that's okay! All you need to do is identify who your offerings *are* for, or who they're *most* for. Try to be as specific as possible about your target audience—their age, location, and interests.

As an example from my own work, I found that my interactive, movement-based style of music education resonated best in play-based and Reggio Emilia schools, so that's who I targeted first.

Once you have identified at least a couple audience segments, move to the second question: What's available already? For this, identify who else is currently providing services like yours to your target audience(s). Identify what attributes are common among those providers. For example:

- What instruments do they play?
- Do they sing a cappella?
- Electric or acoustic?
- Are they mostly solo performers or bands?
- What genre(s) of music are most common?

When you have that ready, it's on to:

3) Marketing Strategy

This one is deceptively simple. Now that you've analyzed the competition, the most important questions to answer are:

1) What attributes do I bring that are common?

2) What attributes do I bring that are rare?

Write down one or two answers to each. This will help you identify what aspects of *you* will be more familiar to your audience (e.g., if you play guitar, this can help build trust quickly among new customers), as well as your more *unique* or *niche* aspects (e.g., you have a STEM background, you're a trained dancer). These aspects help you stand out amid a crowded field.

Not 100 percent sure what your niche aspects are? Ask a few people who know your work well! Colleagues, friends, family, ardent fans—they'll tell you.

For example, in my work, I come with a background in music (college degree) and performance. This is common among music educators, so when I first meet a school, I lead with this, and they quickly trust me. Then I present my uniqueness: extensive experience in Early Childhood Development, which means I specialize in leading classes for ages zero to two, which many musicians find more challenging. (For more on this, read up on the concept of unique value proposition[3].)

That's all. When you're ready, it's on to:

4) Key Metrics for Success

Key metrics for success are goals or targets you want to hit. They should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-Bound

Basically, they should be detailed, have numbers, and have deadlines. You can do it!

There are two types of metrics I want you to write for yourself: *income metrics* and *foundation metrics*. (I made up those terms, so don't Google them.)

Income metrics are goals for activities that *directly generate income.* Examples of these goals are:

- Have twenty-five classes per week (regular)
- Book three parties per month (minimum)
- Book forty concerts per year (minimum)

Notice that this is directly related to Products and Services. What are your goals for how much of each product or service you want to sell?

Foundation metrics, on the other hand, *indirectly generate income*. You know that if you do them, they'll lead to income, but they don't, in and of themselves, make you money. Some examples:

- Make twenty cold calls to schools per week
- Make five networking calls to get word-of-mouth referral to new customers per week
- Write two new songs per month

To recap: income metrics directly generate revenue; foundation metrics indirectly generate revenue. Jot down your top two for each.

Now, it's on to the final piece. Everyone's favorite:

5) Pricing and Budgeting

It's numbers time!

There are many ways to determine price. (For more information, read this article about cost-based, value-based, and market-based pricing[4].) The easiest way for you, however, will probably be to make fifteen to twenty calls and get seven to ten actual price points from people in your area.

The only rule I have for you is that when you have a good idea of what others are charging, *don't be at the bottom*. Two reasons: first, you'll seem "cheap," and second, others will resent you because even if you're not aiming to undercut them, it will look like that.

Budgeting, like pricing, is too complicated a topic to explain in a single article but know that it all boils down to one number: your business income.

Not your personal income—though that is important—but rather the amount of money you want your business to bring in.

Use this simple formula:

Business Income = Your Personal Income + Expenses (+ Taxes)

All you need to do is replace the parts of the right-hand side of the equation with numbers. How much income do you want to personally make from your business? How much will running the business cost? (Don't forget to factor in how much you'll pay in taxes.)

The main difficulty lies in Expenses: how do you calculate them? Estimate them? Categorize them?

If you're feeling unsure, get help! Help can come in the form of a part-time accountant, a family member who's good with numbers, or this spreadsheet budgeting template[5]. (To create your own editable copy, click the link, then click File > Make a copy.)

Using Your Business Plan

Amazing—you've done it! You have a one-page business plan draft. This is a great exercise to repeat once per year, and it's great if you can get together with someone else to do it. Two minds work better than one on this kind of strategic, creative thinking.

This business plan should help you decide what products and services to offer and to whom. It should help you decide how to market your offerings, what short- and long-term goals you have for each product or service, and how much you're going to charge to make what you want/need to make.

A business plan isn't a silver bullet, but it can be a steel scaffold. Good luck. If you found this useful, or if you didn't, or if you have comments or reactions, please email me at matt.fernald@gmail.com[6].

Now, go be the business you always wanted to be!

Additional Resources

A longer article about making a business plan[7]

That spreadsheet budgeting template[8] I mentioned in Part 5

That pricing article I also mentioned in Part 5: "The 3 Most Common Pricing Strategies[9]"

A book about systematizing creativity: *Creativity, Inc.*[10] by Ed Catmull, one of the Pixar founders

If you want to build a simple, easy website, try Google Sites[11]

If you want to find a part-time designer, accountant, etc., try Upwork[12]. You can also try a local university, chamber of commerce, or community college.

Most of all, don’t give up[13]!

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Anything Song

words and music by Eugenia Grammer
© 1992 Genie Grammer

Eugenia Grammer is a new Children's Music Network member who has been participating in Kim Wallach's virtual Wednesday Song Swaps all the way from Venetie, Alaska, thirty-five miles north of the Arctic Circle. Venetie is "an Athabascan Indian settlement of 208 people. Venetie has three dozen log cabins, a post office, laundromat, three trucks, eight or nine streets, an Episcopal church, a roomy new school, and some of the most extreme weather on Earth. In winter, temperatures sink below minus 50 degrees and rise into the 80s in summer. Few Indian settlements on this continent are farther north." ("People in Peril: The Ever-Vigilant Venetie[1]")

Eugenia is the Head Start Education and Disabilities Coordinator and Part-Time Home Visitor for the council of Athabascan Tribal Governments. She tells us:

"I wrote 'Anything Song' long ago when I was young . . . back in the hippie days (late 1960s). I traveled with my guitar on my back, and folks would ask if I could play it. 'Sure,' I said. 'Okay, then play something.' 'What?' 'Oh, anything.' And ta-dah! The 'Anything Song'!

"I think what I like about 'Anything Song' is that it came very easily to me. Some songs do, and they are all my favorites. Some songs I have to ponder on and rework and rework. They may be good songs, but not my favorites.

"My first public performance as a folk singer was in San Antonio in 1968, while I was stationed at Brooks Army Medical Center, learning to be a medical lab tech. I was singing the currently popular folk songs in a local coffee house and kept muddling the words because I was so nervous, so I asked the audience to sing with me to keep me on track. I loved it, and so did they! Before that, my public appearances were in the city youth orchestra as a cellist in Karlsruhe, Germany. Not the same at all!

"I've loved music all my life, but because I had a specific learning disability (very poor visual memory), I couldn't read music and learned all the music by ear, even the cello pieces. All these years later, I'm still counting up and down the staff to figure out the notes. I never had a career in music; music just became part of my life as a teacher. I love teaching children music. I don't play for the school anymore, because of COVID restrictions and also because I have a different full-time job after retiring from teaching. I am introducing parents to the magic of music for their infants, toddlers, and twos in Early Head Start. I still also play for the church, which has minimal attendance!"

CMN is so very glad that COVID brought us this dynamic and caring teacher.

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1. https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/2019/04/05/people-in-peril-the-ever-vigilant-venetie

Anything Song

words and music by Eugenia Grammer
© 1992 Genie Grammer

swung

C G

If you ask me what I sing, I tell you it's a song called an - y - thing. And

C

if you want to sing a - long, here's how to sing the an - y - thing song:

F C G C

An - y - thing I sing is gon - na be all - right; an - y - thing at all that I wan - na sing.

F C G C

Do 'n do - do 'n do 'n do 'n do - do. I can sing just a - bout an - y ol' thing.

Verse
If you ask me what I sing,
I'll tell you it's a song called anything.
And if you want to sing along,
Here's how to sing the Anything Song:

Chorus 1
Anything I sing is gonna be all right;
Anything at all that I wanna sing.
Do'n do-do 'n do 'n do 'n do-do;
I can sing just about any ol' thing!

The red hen and the rooster bright
Wanted to sing a song for me.
They sang all day, and they sang all night;
Here's the song they sang for me:

Chorus 2
Anything we sing is gonna be all right;
Anything at all that we wanna sing.
Cluck cluck cluck cock-a-doodle-de-doo;
We can sing just about any ol' thing!

When I went to the county fair.
I took my pet duck along.
We didn't want the counties there,
We just wanted to sing the anything song.

Chorus 3
Anything we sing is gonna be all right;
Anything at all that we want to sing.
Quack quack quack fiddle-diddle-dee-dee;
We can sing just about any ol' thing.

If you want to add another verse,
Just be sure to make it rhyme.
It couldn't be better; it couldn't be worse,
And you can sing it any ol' time.

Chorus 4
Anything you sing is gonna be all right;
Anything at all that you wanna sing.
Do'n do-do 'n do 'n do 'n do-do;
You can sing just about any ol' thing!

Chorus 1

Who Can Count the Snowflakes

words and music by Kim Wallach
© 2020 Kim Wallach Black Socks Press BMI

How could we let winter pass without a song about snowflakes? Here is Kim Wallach's charming "Who Can Count the Snowflakes." Kim tells us what she loves about counting songs and rhymes.

1. Lots of repetition
2. Can learn easily in one or two sessions
3. Predictable
4. But there is usually one element of surprise or humor or delight in the story
5. Hand motions, so your body movements keep you involved and assist your memory
6. Language—because of the repetition and the rhyme, it is a great way for early English speakers to learn the patterns and sounds and words of the language. While most of the words are simple, often there is one word that is new and rich.
7. Easily adapted: change *apples* to *peaches*, change *bunnies* to *kangaroos*. When I first was teaching, all the pronouns in all the chants were masculine. I changed them to 50/50. In the last few years, I've tried to make them gender neutral. Shouldn't all children be able to imagine themselves as the main character in the story?
8. Counting songs are mini novels. They tell a whole story from beginning to end in just over a minute.

Kim continues, "Once you've started adapting them, you're only one step away from writing your own. When several of my favorites were discredited as having racist roots, I started making up new ones.

"I live in a relatively rural area in New England with wide-ranging seasonal changes and a curriculum that follows them, so naturally many of my chants reflect that. But as any songwriter knows, sometimes you lose control. I set out to write a counting song about snowflakes. I went out to walk the dog, and we were engulfed in a swirl of snowflakes. 'One little snowflake,' I began to myself. 'Hah! Who can count the snowflakes?' and I was off on a different tack entirely.

"So, I have written quite a few simple counting rhymes, and one that counts the strings of stringed instruments up to eighty-eight, and a geometric progression song about Greta Thunberg, and one that counts the items on a messy bedroom floor, and one about picking blueberries that goes to eleven. Everything is up on my Black Socks Press YouTube channel[1] and a few are with Songs for Teaching[2]."

Please sing along with this non-counting counting song, during the next snowstorm or anytime you feel like pondering the uncountable.

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1. https://www.youtube.com/user/blacksockspress
2. https://www.songsforteaching.com/index.php?p=catalog&mode=search&search_in=all&search_str=kim+wallach&x=0&y=0

Who Can Count the Snowflakes

words and music by Kim Wallach
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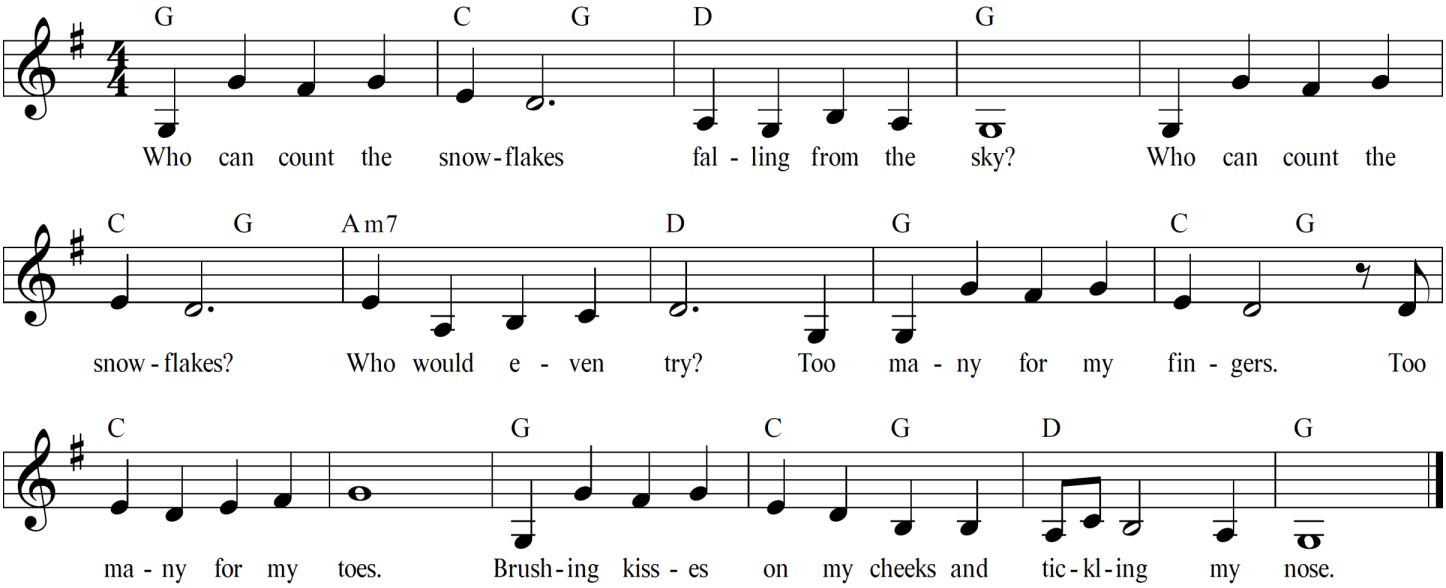
G C G D G
Who can count the snow-flakes fal - ling from the sky? Who can count the
C G Am7 D G C G
snow-flakes? Who would e - ven try? Too ma - ny for my fin - gers. Too
C G C G D G
ma - ny for my toes. Brush-ing kiss - es on my cheeks and tic-kl-ing my nose.

Who can count the snowflakes
Falling from the sky?
Who can count the snowflakes?
Who would even try?
Too many for my fingers.
Too many for my toes.
Brushing kisses on my cheeks,
And tickling my nose.

Who can count the snowflakes
Thick upon the air?
Who can count the snowflakes?
There are too many there!
Covering the branches,
Covering the tree,
Covering the shivering dog,
And the shivering me!

Who can count the snowflakes
Blanketing the hill?
Who can count the snowflakes?
I don't think I will!
I think I'll build a snowman,
And a snowy dome.
I think I'll sled right down the hill
And then I'll slide right home.

I'm Gonna Use My Hands

words and music by Tom Smith
© 2018 Peabody Hill Publishing (ASCAP)

When we heard Tom sing "I'm Gonna Use My Hands" at a Wednesday song swap with Kim Wallach, we knew we wanted to help Tom share this gem. Tom invites you to take advantage of the teaching materials, music video, and MP3 download at https://www.tomsmithmusic.com/hands[1].

We asked Tom how he came to write this song. He told us, "It is a song I wrote to lift myself out of a slump during a particularly bad news week. I thought it might be a good song to sing with students in a show I was preparing for the Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts—a song to encourage the kids to participate in making the world a better place.

"Most of my shows these days are for adults, and on a whim, I sang it at Club Passim in Cambridge, Massachusetts, shortly after I wrote it. It was heartwarming to hear that room full of adults join in full voice. One of the folks in the audience was particularly taken with the song and offered to fund a recording. Happily, his grant not only funded a live audio recording, but there was also enough left over for a music video too.

"I asked my two grandchildren to gather some of their friends and we met up at the local arts center with my music sidekick, Seth Connelly, and, of course, large amounts of pizza. I taught them the song, and within an hour, we were all done and gathered at the pizza table!

"I was inspired to continue recording some other original songs of struggle and inspiration. That project, entitled *Planting in a Drought*, is recently completed, and 'I'm Gonna Use My Hands' will be included on it. However, CMN folks should know that although the album is family-friendly, it is not specifically intended for children. If folks are interested in that project, or my other musical activities, please visit my website: TomSmithMusic.com[2]."

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1. https://www.tomsmithmusic.com/hands
2. http://tomsmithmusic.com

I'm Gonna Use My Hands

words and music by Tom Smith
© 2018 Peabody Hill Publishing (ASCAP)

Swing! ♫ = ♩³♪

sing freely with expression!

Verse

D ***(spoken)*** G

I'm gon-na use my hands. I'll find a bro-ken thing to mend.

A D

I'm gon-na use my hands. I'm gon-na use my hands.

D ***(spoken)*** G

I'm gon-na use my hands. I'll build a bridge and make a friend.

A D

I'm gon-na use my hands. I'm gon-na use my hands.

Chorus

G A B m

I'm gon-na make the world a bet-ter place.

A G A D 1, 2, 3, 4, end.

I'm gon-na use my hands.

5. G

We're gon-na use our hands. We're gon-na use our brains.

A D ***to Chorus***

We're gon-na use our voice. We're gon-na use our hearts.

Verse
I'm gonna use my hands.
I'll find a broken thing to mend.
I'm gonna use my hands.
I'm gonna use my hands.
I'm gonna use my hands.
I'll build a bridge and make a friend.
I'm gonna use my hands.
I'm gonna use my hands.

Chorus
I'm gonna make the world a better place.
I'm gonna use my hands.

I'm gonna use my brain.
Turn every loss into a gain.
I'm gonna use my brain.
I'm gonna use my brain.
I'm gonna use my brain,
And if I fail, I'll try again.
I'm gonna use my brain.
I'm gonna use my brain.

Chorus

I'm gonna use my voice.
If something's wrong I'm makin' noise!
I'm gonna use my voice.
I'm gonna use my voice.
I'm gonna use my voice
'Cause everybody has a choice.
I'm gonna use my voice.
I'm gonna use my voice.

Chorus

I'm gonna use my heart.
This is the hardest part.
I'm gonna use my heart.
I'm gonna use my heart.
I'm gonna use my heart.
Let's find a common place and start.
I'm gonna use my heart.
I'm gonna use my heart.

Chorus

We're gonna use our hands.
We're gonna use our brains.
We're gonna use our voice.
We're gonna use our hearts.
We're gonna use our hands.
We're gonna use our brains.
We're gonna use our voice.
We're gonna use our hearts.

Chorus

Social Media Tip #4

by Nikki Rung, CMN Social Media Manager

WATCH FOR TRENDS!

If you notice a pattern or strategy rising in popularity and it aligns with your messaging, then it's a great idea to capitalize on it to drive engagement. Be mindful though, you never need to create a particular type of content just because you see other brands doing it.

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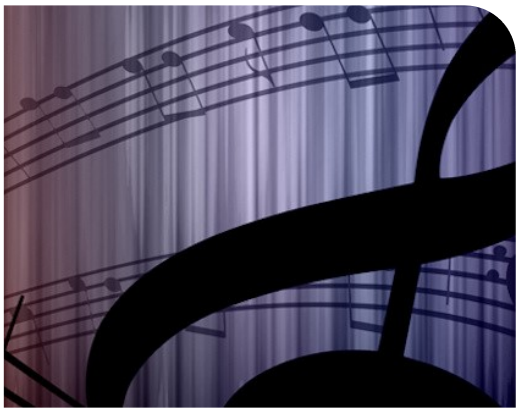
1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Zi9VyQDyk0

About PIO!

Pass It On! publishes thoughtful, informative articles on children's music, empowering those who teach, write, perform, share, and produce it to strengthen their craft and their advocacy. All articles are open to the public, providing CMN members and the wider community with news about exciting programs, music history, business tips, and in-depth interviews with music legends. Our songs for children —serious and silly, traditional and brand new, for all ages and from all over the world—are meant to be learned and shared.



CMN members receive exclusive access to songs and to all issues of *Pass It On!* Join Now[1]

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How to Submit Something to *Pass It On!*

Articles

Pass It On! always needs stories from members about what they're doing and how they're doing it. If you are a CMN member, you are invited to share your story. After all, that's the whole point of CMN.

Songs

Most of the songs published in *Pass It On!* are contributed by CMN members, and we welcome songs written by people from various parts of the continent or the world. Please share your works with us.

Interested? Read our guidelines for submission[8] to *Pass It On!*

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